

# The Civic Engagement Times

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A Call from the Corner Office	2
Engaged Governance	2
Winter Energy Assistance	3
Sitting down with Non-Profits	3
Events from the Executive Branch and Across the Commonwealth	4 & 5

## *A Message from the Governor*

The global economic downturn has hit home in Massachusetts. Earlier this month, I announced more than \$1 billion in spending cuts, cost controls, and other budget solutions to fill a budget gap. You can get more information by visiting [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov) and clicking Governor's Fiscal Action Plan.

I have not taken these decisions lightly. I know that behind every cut is a family, a worker, an important service or a worthy idea. Throughout this process I have attempted to balance our fiscal realities with the very real human impact behind each decision. As much as possible, we have tried to preserve funding and assistance for the people who lean on their government more in times like these.

No one knows how long this will last or just where the future will take us. However, come what may we will confront that future together, as a strong statewide community. Now is the time for us to lean on one another and see our common stake in each other's well being. If you are fortunate enough to have resources, energy, or time to spare, please do what you can to help as well. Check in with a neighbor who you think might be struggling, learn about energy and cost savings measures for your home and pass the information along to friends. Learn more about how you can help by visiting [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov) and clicking "Want to Help" My confidence in the future of the Commonwealth and her people is unshaken and unshakable. I intend to stick with you, and I ask you to stick with each other. Together, we will get through today's challenges to a brighter tomorrow.



## HAPPENINGS IN WESTERN MA

Governor Patrick makes stops in W. MA towns 98 times since taking office.

**Nov. 7, 2008**— In response to Governor Patrick's call for greater engagement between **UMass Amherst** and the **City of Springfield**, a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed to formalize a commitment to increase education and economic development.

Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development launches **Building a Better Workforce— City of Springfield Workforce Development Plan** Focusing on High Growth Sectors, Adult Literacy, Youth Education

Governor Patrick, **Liberty Mutual** and local officials bring a new office and the commitment of 300 jobs to the City of Springfield.

## *Governor Swears in Statewide Youth Council*

On September 12, 2008, Governor Deval Patrick swore in the inaugural members of the Governor's Statewide Youth Council.

As part of the Governor's commitment to engaging all residents of the Commonwealth in their communities and their government, this Council encourages community participation and problem solving through leadership and planning.

For more information please visit [www.mass.gov/governor/youthcouncil](http://www.mass.gov/governor/youthcouncil).

### Comments from the Council:

"I can bring a lot to the table... There's a lot of issues in Western MA I want to change," Christopher Alvarez, 17, of Springfield.  
Springfield Republican, Sept. 14, 2008

"I want to see more involvement of youth... And really, I'm just honored to be able to represent my small town," Valerie DiCristoforo, 15, of Monson.  
Boston Globe, Sept. 12, 2008



## A Call from the Corner Office

In times of economic uncertainty, service matters even more, not less. As we approach the holiday season, it is important to remember our shared responsibility in our shared prosperity.

So far this year over 4,000 Executive Branch state employees have volunteered over 17,000 hours of their time to communities where they live and work.

And on September 25, 2008 over 60 state employees from twelve agencies and executive offices across state government joined together to participate in the United Way's Community Care Day.

Alice Sweeney from the Department of Workforce Development said "...I have always

been proud that I have made my career in public service and the SERV shift was a great reminder of why I still remain in the business."

Executive Branch state employees can participate in the State Employees Responding as Volunteers (SERV) program and volunteer up to 8 work hours per month at an approved organization.

(Please visit [www.mass.gov/serv](http://www.mass.gov/serv) for program details and a list of approved organizations in your community.)

The Connect and Serve portal on [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov) also connects individuals with volunteer opportunities within their communities. Now is the perfect time to consider volunteering at a food pantry, shelter, hospital,

or school. You could mentor a student, transcribe books into Braille, provide elder services or consider making a donation to a food or clothing drive.

(For organizations in **your** community that need **your** help, please visit [www.mass.gov/connectandserve](http://www.mass.gov/connectandserve).)

"We have to transform our commonwealth. We have to do that and can only do that one person at a time. We must encourage and foster active citizenship neighborhood by neighborhood and stand up as a community to say that we will not allow anyone to become trapped in a life without hope or a future." Gov. Patrick 7.11.07

## GOVERNOR'S CALL TO ACTION

### Service Matters

Did you know:

- In 2007 **1.4 million people** in MA volunteered more than **160 million hours**
- The estimated economic contribution of which was **\$3.1 billion** last year alone

### What will your contribution be?

Visit Connect and Serve to find volunteer opportunities in your community



[www.mass.gov/connectandserve](http://www.mass.gov/connectandserve)

### Are you a State Employee?

So far this year more than 1,500 employees have volunteered more than 21,000 hours in 2008



Visit [www.mass.gov/serv](http://www.mass.gov/serv) for approved organizations

## Engaged Governance

At the core of Governor Patrick's Administration is a message of engaged governance and a call to all residents of Massachusetts to have a stake in our Commonwealth, in our communities and in each other.

For many that call has been to serve the Administration and the Commonwealth on one of the more than 750 boards and commissions across Massachusetts. We are fortunate that so many of Massachusetts' most distinguished and engaged minds have already answered the Governor's call. To date, Governor Patrick has appointed over 930 individuals from 222 cities and towns across the Commonwealth. Earlier this year

the Governor appointed the Hyams Foundation's **Angela Brown-Jones** to the Massachusetts Asset Development Commission (MADC); which focuses on asset development strategies for low-income and low-asset individuals and families. Established in 2006, MADDC strives to ensure that all residents of the Commonwealth, especially those who are low and moderate income, have the opportunity to experience financial stability, achieve financial independence, and contribute to civic participation and the economy.

In August, Governor Patrick appointed **Mark Bilotta** of the Colleges of Worcester Consortium, Inc. to the Board of the Massachusetts Health

and Education Facilities Authority. The mission of HEFA is to help nonprofit organizations like hospitals, colleges and universities, cultural and research institutions, and human service providers to thrive by securing low-cost, tax-exempt financing for important capital projects.

These appointments and hundreds of others reflect Governor Patrick's commitment to engaged governing. For more information about housing, economic and community development, please visit [www.mass.gov/hed](http://www.mass.gov/hed).

## Winter Heating Assistance

On September 29<sup>th</sup>, a push by Governor Patrick and the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation for significant new investments in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) paid off when the President signed the 2008 Continuing Resolution into law. LIHEAP is a federal program that makes home heating more affordable, targeting assistance to families living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level or up 60% of median state income depending on yearly funding. The program is especially crucial in Massachusetts, where harsh winters and rising oil and natural gas prices often force families to make a terrible choice between heating their homes, making mortgage/rental payments or seeking appropriate medical care. 40% of Massachusetts households rely on oil to heat their

homes, and with high fuel oil prices, families are looking at paying close to \$1,000 more to heat their homes than they did last winter.

Last winter, LIHEAP helped nearly 144,000 households in Massachusetts meet their energy needs. This winter, Massachusetts hopes to assist a greater number with increased federal funding. With additional federal LIHEAP and emergency assistance funding, and a contribution by the Commonwealth, Massachusetts will have approximately \$55 million more in funding to assist low income families this year.

**LIHEAP is administered locally, call the Mass Heat Line toll-free at 1-800-632-8175 to find a program near you and to learn more.** There has also been important progress in health care funding. Last month, Governor Patrick reached a

\$21.2 billion Medicaid waiver agreement with the Bush Administration. The agreement will allow Massachusetts to continue to expand its universal health care reform program. It provides a \$4.3 billion increase in Medicaid funding from last year, and ensures that existing eligibility and benefit levels for Medicaid will be protected. Since the launch of Massachusetts' health care reform program two years ago, nearly 440,000 residents who were previously uninsured have bought affordable health care plans. **For more information on health care options for you and your family and to learn more about health care reform in Massachusetts by calling 1-877-MA-ENROLL or visiting the Massachusetts Connector website at [www.mahealthconnector.org](http://www.mahealthconnector.org).**

## Sitting Down with Non-Profits

### *Governor Patrick meets with the Health and Human Service Providers*

In preparation of his Fiscal Action Plan announcement on October 15, 2008, Governor Patrick and Lt. Governor Murray hosted a series of meetings with key stakeholders including representatives from labor, homelessness, veterans and substance abuse recovery communities, the MA Nonprofit Network and several umbrella organizations that focus primarily on health

and human services programs.

These conversations allowed the Governor to hear first hand the impact our economic and budgetary climate may have on health and human service providers and how to ensure the continuation of critical services within the Commonwealth.

Because of his belief that the most vulnerable among

us should not be asked to shoulder the burden in difficult economic times, the Governor assured those service providers that cuts would be made with care and compassion.

The impact was ultimately limited on such services as health care, homelessness, domestic violence and hunger programs as well as funding for veterans, elders and disability services.

## COMMONWEALTH CORPS INSPIRE. UNITE. ACT.

### SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT:

### UMASS- DARTMOUTH & BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Project**—Leadership for Educational Attainment through Service (L.E.A.D.S.)

In September, pairs of Corps members working as LEADS teams began working with middle school students in the Fall River and New Bedford schools, educating them about leadership, educational attainment, and service to the community.

**Roselle Arpino**, Commonwealth Corps member and senior at UMass-Dartmouth looks forward to "developing a relationship with the students and schools" and promoting leadership skills that will help youth for a lifetime.



## *From the Executive Branch and Across the Commonwealth*

Public events being hosted by the Executive Offices include:

### HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

#### Dept. of Public Health

**Nov. 14**—The Mechanics of Substance Abuse Treatment: How to Get it to Work! Florian Hall, 55 Hallet St., Dorchester

Covering the most current treatment strategies and interventions for individuals with an addictive disorder. For registration details please call 617.971.4971.

#### Public Health Council

**Nov. 12 +Dec. 10**—250 Washington St., Henry I. Bowditch Public Health Council Room – 2nd Fl., Boston 9AM  
[www.mass.gov/hhs](http://www.mass.gov/hhs)  
keyword: Public Health Council

#### Office of Refugees and Immigrants

New Americans Agenda Public Meetings, 5:30PM–7:30PM

**Nov. 19**—Hyannis

**Dec. 10**—New Bedford

The NAA is a year long planning initiative, which aims to better integrate refugees and immigrants into the economic and civic life of the Commonwealth. These public meetings are a wonderful way for community groups and individuals to provide valuable input on this important topic.

[www.newamericansma.org](http://www.newamericansma.org)

### PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY

#### Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB)

Public Meetings - to consider applications submitted by agencies seeking CORI certification.

**Nov. 19**—CHSB CNFR, 200 Arlington St., Chelsea 9:30AM-12:30PM

#### Gun Control Advisory Board

**Dec. 12**—State Police HQ, 470 Worcester Rd., Framingham, 10AM

### USEFUL CONTACTS:

Not sure where to turn?

Let us help.

[www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov)

Governor's Office  
617.725.4005

#### Homeownership Preservation Foundation

Foreclosure Hotline  
888.995.4673  
[www.995hope.org](http://www.995hope.org)

#### Pro Bono Foreclosure Assistance Hotline

800.342.5297  
617.603.1700

#### Department of Housing and Community Development

Heat Hotline: 800.632.8175  
[www.mass.gov/dhcd](http://www.mass.gov/dhcd)

Greater Boston Food Bank  
617.427.5200

Worcester County Food Bank  
508.842.3663

The Food Bank of Western MA  
413.247.9738

Merrimack Valley Food Bank  
978.454.7272

#### Food Source Hotline

800.645.8333  
800.877.1292

#### Commonwealth Health Insurance Connector

877.623.6765  
[www.mahealthconnector.org](http://www.mahealthconnector.org)

### ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

#### MassDEP

Cape Wind Project Waterways Application Public Hearing

**Nov. 5**—Mattacheese Middle School, 400 Higgins Crowell Rd., West Yarmouth 6:30PM

Public hearing to construct and maintain submarine cables in association with the Cape Wind Energy Project wind farm.

#### Dept. of Conservation and Recreation

**Nov. 7**—Lawrence Heritage State Park, 1 Jackson St., 1pm

The Stewardship Council works with the Department of Conservation and Recreation to provide a safe, accessible, well maintained, and well-managed system of open spaces and recreational facilities.

[http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship\\_council.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship_council.htm)

### LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

#### The Massachusetts Regional Workforce Strategies Initiative

is a statewide effort to build regional capacity to prepare MA workers for high demand jobs.

(For event details, please visit [www.mass.gov/eolwd](http://www.mass.gov/eolwd).)

**Nov. 24**—Cape Cod Community College, Hyannis 9:00AM-12:00PM

**Dec. 11**—Boston (location TBD) 8:30AM-11:30AM

### HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### Dept. of Housing and Economic Development

**Nov. 7**—Organizing For Community Development Workshop, Merrimack College, North Andover, 8:30AM-3:30PM

Workshop introduces participants to different phases of community development, helping communities move beyond planning to successful project implementation.

(For location, details and registration information visit the **News & Updates Section** at [www.mass.gov/dhcd](http://www.mass.gov/dhcd).)

## Office of Access and Opportunity

### State of Civil Rights in the Commonwealth

Residents are encouraged to come forward and share their comments and concerns about civil rights issues impacting them or their community.

(If you cannot attend, but would like to submit comments, you can do so at [stateofcivilrights@state.ma.us](mailto:stateofcivilrights@state.ma.us).)

**Nov. 6**—Springfield Technical Community Colleges, Scibelli Hall, Rm. 703, Springfield, 6:00-8:00pm

(Hosted in conjunction with the MA Commission Against Discrimination, the Civil Rights Division of the Attorney General's Office, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the MA Office on Disability.)

## TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS

### The State Freight and Rail Plan

**Nov. 3**—Union Station (second floor), 2 Washington Sq., Worcester, 1-3PM

**Nov. 5**—Pomodores, 2424 Cranberry Highway (Route 28), Wareham, 3-5PM

**Nov. 20**—Copley Plaza Hotel - 138 Saint James Ave. Boston, 2-4PM

### MPO Meetings— Topic : 2009 Transportation Improvement Program

**Nov. 5**—Pioneer Valley—Planning Commission, 26 Central St., West Springfield 10AM

**Nov. 6**—Boston Region—10 Park Plaza, CNFR 2, Boston 10AM

### Safe Routes to School Forum

**Nov. 6**—Royal Plaza Hotel, 181 Boston Post Road W, Marlborough, 9AM - 4PM  
Share best practices, lessons learned, and further growth of the program, which reaches nearly 160 schools and 70,000 students in 66+ communities statewide.

## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

### Affirmative Market Program

**Nov. 13**—Basic Vendor Workshop  
Operational Services Division, 1 Ashburton Place, Room 1017, Boston, 10AM-12PM

For minority and women-owned businesses who want to learn how to  
\* maximize their SOMWBA certification status  
\* find opportunities for AMP partnerships  
\* and market services as an AMP participant to state departments.

**Nov. 5**—How to Submit an Effective AMP Plan Workshop  
Operational Services Division, 1 Ashburton Place, Room 1017, Boston, 10AM-12PM

(All workshops and training require pre-registration and some require an entrance fee. Please go to [www.mass.gov/amp](http://www.mass.gov/amp) for details.)

### Operational Services Division- Quality Assurance, Training and Outreach

OSD will be providing information to municipalities on cost saving opportunities with OSD's statewide contracts, programs and services:

**Nov. 4**—Acton Professional Development Day - Acton

**Nov. 12**—Department of Fire Services Fall Conference - Westford

**Nov. 19+20**—MA Association of Computer Using Educators - Sturbridge

## MA Smart Growth/Smart Energy Conference

Think Green: Educate & Engage

December 12, 2008  
8AM-4PM

Boston Convention & Exhibition Center  
415 Summer Street

Focusing on the latest in:

<b>Housing</b>	<b>Transportation</b>
<b>Energy</b>	<b>Public Health</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>Environmental Innovations</b>

Registration information at:  
[www.mass.gov/smartgrowth](http://www.mass.gov/smartgrowth)

Sponsored by: The Patrick/Murray Administration; EOHEd; DHCD; EOEEA; EOHS and EOTPW.

## Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service Project Initiative Request for Proposals Offered by the Massachusetts Service Alliance

### Requirements:

- Projects must engage volunteers in service during the Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend (January 16-19, 2009).
- Projects can meet a tangible need, such as fixing up a school or senior center, or may meet a need of the spirit, such as building a sense of community or mutual responsibility.

Applications available at [www.mass-service.org](http://www.mass-service.org).

Deadline: 12 noon, Thursday, November 13, 2008.

The MSA will provide technical assistance on an individual basis. Please contact Lisa Frederick, 617.542.2544 x. 226 or [lfrederick@mass-service.org](mailto:lfrederick@mass-service.org).

## Don't Forget to Vote



**Tuesday, November 4th is Election Day.** As citizens of Massachusetts and the United States, there is no greater act of civic engagement than casting your ballot for your representation. This year we will be electing a new president, members of the state legislature and voting on three statewide ballot questions.

For more information, please call Secretary of State William Galvin's office at (800) 392-6090 or (617) 727-7030 or visit <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleidx.htm>.